

CLAIMS

1. An austenitic stainless steel less crack-sensitive during forming, which has the composition consisting of C up to 0.04 mass %, 0.1-1.0 mass % Si, Mn up to 5.0 mass %, S up to 0.0060 mass %, Al up to 0.003 mass %, 5.9 mass % Ni, 15-20 mass % Cr, N up to 0.035 mass %, 1.0-5.0 mass % Cu and the balance being Fe except inevitable impurities, and has nonmetallic  $MnO \cdot SiO_2 \cdot Al_2O_3$  inclusions, which contains not less than 15 mass % of  $SiO_2$  and not more than 40 mass % of  $Al_2O_3$ , dispersed in its matrix.

2. A method of manufacturing austenitic stainless steel, which comprises the steps of:

10 preparing a molten steel having the composition consisting of C up to 0.04 mass %, 0.1-1.0 mass % Si, Mn up to 5.0 mass %, S up to 0.0060 mass %, Al up to 0.003 mass %, 5.9 mass % Ni, 15-20 mass % Cr, N up to 0.035 mass %, 1.0-5.0 mass % Cu and the balance being Fe except inevitable impurities;

15 covering said molten steel with basic slag in a vacuum or non-oxidizing atmosphere; and

20 strongly deoxidizing said molten steel by addition of a Si alloy whose Al content is controlled less than 1.0 mass %.